



Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission Meeting Notes

November 13, 2008 – 12:00 p.m.

Telephonic Meeting

Rebuild Iowa Office

Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines

Commission Members

Major General Ron Major General Dardis, Commission Chair, Johnston
Gary Anderson, Centerville
Bill Bywater, Iowa City
Jim Davis, Charles City
Jim Fausett, Coralville
Bill Gerhard, Iowa City
Brent Halling, Perry
Mike King, Creston
Linda Larkin, Fort Madison
Nitza Lopez-Castillo, Columbus Junction
Carroll Reasoner, Cedar Rapids
Amy Truax, Parkersburg
Mark Wandro, Des Moines

Guests

Jami Haberl, Iowa Safeguard Partnership, Des Moines
David Miller, Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD), Des Moines

Staff Present:

Adam Bartelt, RIO
Tim Criner, RIO
Tara Deering-Hansen, RIO
Jennifer Furler, SPPG
Emily Hajek, RIO
Paritosh Kasotia, SPPG
Hank Manning, RIO
Arlinda McKeen, SPPG
Tina Potthoff, RIO
Ron Randazzo, RIO
Bill Riley, RIO
Drew Sachs, JLWA (RIO)
Lynn Zook, RIO

Welcome, Roll Call, and Opening Comments

Major General Dardis thanked everyone for joining the meeting. He mentioned the presence of media members on mute and asked the media to contact the Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO) for any specific questions. Major General Dardis said that the 120-Day Report will be completed by

noon on Friday, November 14. He also acknowledged the presence of RIO and State Public Policy Group (SPPG) staff.

Major General Dardis conducted roll call and laid out the task for the meeting. He said that the Commission will review the 120-Day Draft Report and suggest any final changes. He thanked McKeen for her work on the report over the weekend and said that the draft report captures the tone and message of the Commission members. Phrases such as “urgent call to action,” “Iowans expect action,” recommendations are imperative,” “stakeholder must take steps together,” “state will lead,” “state must do,” “state vision must be given strong consideration,” all capture the tone of the Commissions’ conversations.

Major General Dardis asked McKeen to lead the discussion.

Commission Review and Finalization of the 120-Day Report

McKeen thanked Major General Dardis and Commission members for their work on the 120-Day Report. She acknowledged the presence of Jennifer Furler and Paritosh Kasotia from SPPG who will be taking diligent notes. She said that SPPG will make the final changes today and finalize the report by early morning tomorrow. SPPG will give the report a final proofreading before it is delivered to the RIO office by noon. The RIO staff will then make copies for transmittal to Governor Culver and Lieutenant Governor on Monday.

McKeen said that the draft report that Commission members received needs proofreading, and there are a few changes that need to be made. She indicated that the grey spaces in the report are placeholders for photographs. SPPG has been working with the RIO to get quality photos for the report. McKeen asked if anyone had any other questions regarding the draft report.

McKeen proceeded with a detailed review and discussion.

Transmittal Letter

McKeen mentioned that Major General Dardis has reviewed the letter and made changes as needed. She asked if anyone had any more changes. A Commission member expressed his concern with the usage of the word “great pride” on the first line of the transmittal letter. He requested that those words be changed to “With great concern for and commitment to Iowa’s recovery.” McKeen asked for Major General Dardis’s approval. He said that it made sense but mentioned that the word “pride” is in reference to the work that has been accomplished to date. McKeen said that SPPG will work with Major General Dardis to get that taken care of.

Acknowledgements

The Commission members did not have any changes to this section.

Executive Summary

McKeen asked the Commission members to only look at the first page of this section because the recommendations are covered in other sections as well. There was a discussion on the second bullet on page 11 of the report. McKeen said that based on her conversations, the second bullet should be changed to “Iowa must do all it can to prevent magnitude of this disaster.” Furler said that the thought should be about what can be controlled. Major General Dardis said that damage is not controlled by humans, but by God. McKeen asked if anyone had any objections to the proposed statement. There were no objections.

A Commission member expressed concern with the usage of the word “crumbling” in the paragraph following the bullets on page 11 and in another page. McKeen asked if “crumbling” is

too strong a word. Should “crumbling” be replaced with “outdated,” “deteriorating,” or “aging?” McKeen asked a Commission member for his thoughts. The Commission member did not seem to have a problem with the usage of the word “crumbling.” At the end of the day, the infrastructure is deteriorating. McKeen said that SPPG will change that to deteriorating or aging.

McKeen informed the Commission members that the Executive Summary has parts that are repeated in sections later on. The reason for such repetition is so that the Executive Summary section can be copied or handed out to policymakers and can serve as a stand-alone document. That is the reason why there is such a degree of repetition. The legislators might not read the whole report, but might carry the Executive Summary which contains the recommendations and strategies with them during the legislative session. A Commission member thanked McKeen for the explanation.

Recovery-Iowa's Future

McKeen mentioned that this section contains the background and the overall rationale for the 120-Day Report. There is a reference to Iowa's “crumbling infrastructure” on the second page of this section, page 22 and SPPG will make changes to that as well. SPPG will also make change to the second bullet in this section on page 21. McKeen asked if anyone had other changes. A Commission member said that on page 14, item number four, fifth bullet, instead of using the word, “fulfill”, the word “fill” should be used. The word “fulfill” does not seem to be a right usage of the word. The Commission member said that the word “fulfill” is used elsewhere as well. McKeen said that SPPG will make that change and asked if anyone had any other comments on page 21-22.

Vision for Long-Term Recovery

McKeen said that she wants to make sure that everyone understands that in the paragraph three on page 25, the words “Beautiful Land” refers to the Indian language meaning of the word Iowa. The Commission members mentioned that they are aware that “Beautiful Land” is in reference to Iowa.

Recommendations and Strategies of the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission

▪ Introductory Comments

A Commission member said that the phrase on paragraph four on page 27 “they need to be acted upon” should be expanded. McKeen asked others for their thoughts. Major General Dardis agreed. He said that the phrase is kind of abrupt and brief. Major General Dardis and McKeen said it is hard to say who has to do it but they will look at that. Major General Dardis said that something like “action must be taken” can be used. McKeen said that another option is to use “they need to be acted upon urgently.”

▪ Recommendation 1

McKeen said that in this recommendation, “disaster case management” is used to differentiate from other case management. Major General Dardis said that the format in 45-Day Report was better and asked McKeen if the 120-Day Report is following a different format. McKeen said that the structure is different because the issues and priorities are put with each recommendation so that it works better for the reader. Major General Dardis said that he does not see the distinction between the first bold sentence and other paragraphs. Continuity in formatting between 45-Day Report and 120-Day Report will be incorporated.

▪ Recommendation 2

McKeen said that on page 30 under strategies, some of strategies refer to “production of housing” and some say just “production.” SPPG will clarify and use “production of housing” or

“housing production” so that it is more clear and consistent. McKeen also suggested changing the third bullet on page 30 to read “provide gap funding to enable production of affordable single-family homes and multi-family units.” The Commission agreed with that.

Major General Dardis asked why the report uses the terms “will”, “must”, and “should.” McKeen said that this is how the recommendations are prioritized. The most important recommendations will be floodplain and regional mapping. The report cannot make all recommendations as “will,” so that is why there is a tier based on the words, “will,” “must,” and “should.” Major General Dardis said that seven of the twelve recommendations are “will” or “must.” That sends a very strong message.

- Recommendation 3
There were no comments.

- Recommendation 4
There were no comments.

- Recommendation 5
There were no comments.

- Recommendation 6
McKeen noted that this recommendation is a “must,” not a “will” recommendation. A Commission member said that it is something that needs to be addressed, and the Commission is recommending strongly that this needs to get done.

- Recommendation 7
There were no comments.

- Recommendation 8
McKeen said that recommendations 8, 9, and 10 all open with the same introductory language to indicate that they are a package that needs to be taken together but, at the same time, are also distinctively different. McKeen noted recent Power Fund Board and Infrastructure meetings which have had the same kind of discussions that focus on regional planning.

- Recommendation 9
There were no comments.

- Recommendation 10
A Commission member suggested adding “using state-of-the-art technology” in the first line on page 46. The revised sentence would read, “The state will complete floodplain mapping for the entire state using state-of-the-art technology.”

Major General Dardis asked if there is significance in this recommendation being number ten on the list. A Commission member said that he had the same question, although it does not make a difference. McKeen said that she had the same struggle, but she was looking at the overall flow from one recommendation to the next recommendation. Her listing is based on how they logically fit together. The twelve recommendations should be read as a package.

A Commission member mentioned that on page 46, paragraph following the bullet points, the word “latest” should be added before “technologies” in the second line and the word “ability” or

“capability” should be used instead of “capacity” in the third line. McKeen said that SPPG can use both “capacity” and “capability” to best convey the meaning.

- Recommendation 11

McKeen said that one of the Commission members wanted to make sure that, within this recommendation, there was an expectation of sunset. McKeen asked the Commissioners to consider that thought. A Commission member said that it should be left as it is. McKeen asked if it is appropriate to put a strategy that talks about periodic evaluation of the recovery and ongoing needs and functions of RIO. Major General Dardis said that is a good idea. A Commission member asked whose job would it be to make that decision: the Governor, the Commission, or the legislature. The Commission is learning a lot about disasters. The RIO needs to be perpetuated and be kept running. McKeen said that at some point, the majority of the recovery needs would have been met. Major General Dardis said that a certain point, there would not be a need to for the RIO, and that kind of determination can be made in the ongoing reports. McKeen said that SPPG can add a strategy that talks about review and evaluation of RIO and remaining recovery needs. A Commission member said that there is term called “substantial completion” that can be useful here. Major General Dardis said that RIO has a big task in front of them and a big challenge.

- Recommendation 12

A Commission member said that National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) does not include all insurance. McKeen said that SPPG will mention NFIP as well as other private insurance in this section, as well as in the last bullet of the recommendation.

McKeen said that a link to RIO website is put in place so that people can find the details they are looking for. The remaining section gives an overview of the process. McKeen thanked the Commission, said that SPPG will make the suggested edits, and asked Major General Dardis to make final comments.

Major General Dardis said that the Commission members have created a strong message and asked if the Commission felt that it has given policymakers the latitude to take these recommendations and further develop and implement them. A Commission member felt that the Commission has given enough latitude or direction. It will be nice to see what the legislators do with it and how they interpret these recommendations. A Commission member talked about a committee that the House of Representatives formed to deal with recovery issues. That is a strong sign. A Commission member asked if any of the members are advocating. McKeen said that citizens can address their ideas with their legislators. Major General Dardis said that most likely, there will be an opportunity for the Commission to come before certain committees and explain some of the strategies and recommendation. Some who have expertise might be asked to join in. McKeen said that having legislators serve on the Task Force is allowing the policymakers start the session better equipped to make informed decisions.

Potthoff said that RIO will publicly present the report to Governor Culver on Monday at 1:00 p.m. at the Kennedy Conference room, Capitol Building. She said that the Commission members are invited. Major General Dardis will make comments, and Governor Culver will discuss the work of RIAC and release the report publicly.

Major General Dardis thanked McKeen and SPPG and RIO team for their work. He gave special thanks to the Commission members for their active involvement and hard work. The meeting adjourned.